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Japan

Agricultural Situation

This Week in Japan

2001

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Report Highlights: A summary of events and developments in the United States' largest export market for agricultural, forestry, and fishery products. This week's highlights include: U.S. Fresh Prunes Make First Ever Japan Appearance; MAFF Sets Final Date for Apple Varietal Testing Hearing; MAFF Considers Tolerance for Unapproved Biotech Varieties in Feed.

Includes PSD changes: No
Includes Trade Matrix: No
Unscheduled Report
Tokyo ATO [JA2]JA



This Week in Japan

An Update of Major News and Events from the Largest U.S. Agricultural Export Market

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U.S. Fresh Prunes Make First Ever Japan Appearance: On July 26, over 2,000 cartons of U.S. fresh prunes arrived at Kansai International Airport marking their first-ever Japan appearance. The Japanese retail purchasing consortium, *Nichiryu*, which is a close trade contact of ATO/Osaka, sold 1,100 cartons to their member companies. According to *Nichiryu*, the fresh prunes were imported and sold on a trial basis. Upon ripening, the fruit had a very sweet 25 degree sugar content and *Nichiryu*'s retail store members sold the fruit at about 50 yen per piece. Retail promotion support along with maturity control and competitive pricing are the main factors which will determine the future success of U.S. fresh prunes in this market. (ATO/Osaka)

MAFF Sets Final Date for Apple Varietal Testing Hearing: The Plant Protection Division of Japan's Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries (MAFF) announced on August 23 that a public hearing will be held on September 6 on the US-Japan Varietal Testing Agreement. The public hearing is the penultimate step in the approval process. Once completed, MAFF is expected to publish the approval in Japan's official gazette within 4-8 weeks. (AgAffairs/APHIS Tokyo)

MAFF Considers Tolerance for Unapproved Biotech Varieties in Feed: This week MAFF's Safety Assessment Sub-Committee agreed on a feed safety proposal that includes setting a 1% tolerance for unapproved biotech varieties in feed. Japan will now notify the WTO for comments followed by the Feed Committee's final approval. If all goes smoothly, the new tolerance law could be effective in early 2002. MAFF's initial approval is good news that will hopefully minimize disruption of U.S. corn shipments found to contain minute levels of StarLink corn. However, the tolerance is a step away from scientifically-based regulations for the products of biotechnology. (AgAffairs Tokyo)

Upcoming Events: August 27 Single-Buyer Showcase with Prince Hotels Chain in Tokyo; August 30 Toho Food Service Fair 2001 in Kobe (Western Japan); September 4 and 7 Nursery Technical Seminar on Ornamental Grass in Tokyo and Fukuoka; September 5 Food Service Fair 2001 in Fukuoka (Western Japan); September 18-19 CGC Food Products Annual Exhibition in Yokohama (near Tokyo); September 26 USMEF Sponsored Luncheon with North Carolina Governor Easley; September 26-28 Health Ingredients Japan in Tokyo.